

Russia roundtable opens

7 July 2007

St Petersburg, Russia - Over 150 international CEOs from the World Economic Forum member companies will convene in St Petersburg, Russia for an exclusive [World Economic Forum Russia CEO Roundtable](#) which aims to foster dialogue and cooperation between Western and Russian companies.

During the two-day meeting, held in partnership with the XIth St Petersburg International Economic Forum, the participants will meet Russian President Vladimir Putin and top Russian cabinet members including First Deputy Prime Ministers Dmitry Medvedev and Sergei Ivanov, Minister of Energy and Industry Victor Khristenko, Minister of Economic Development and Trade Herman Gref and Minister of Finance Aleksey Kudrin.

"This meeting comes at a crucial time as relations between Russia and its Western partners are extremely strained. The World Economic Forum acts as a neutral platform for dialogue and our meetings are a distinct opportunity to bring people together for the express purpose of improving understanding between Russia and its European partners. The world is rapidly changing and Russia, together with China, India and other emerging countries, has become a major power centre in a multipolar world. Our members, mainly coming from the European Union and the USA will have an opportunity to better understand the implications of the changing power equation.

On the other hand, our members will certainly also express their concerns about the need to adhere to universal values, such as the rule of law and human rights. This dialogue will take place in the traditional spirit of the World Economic Forum, which means fostering better mutual understanding and trust," said Klaus Schwab, Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum. "The World Economic Forum encourages closer economic ties as a way to bridge divides and overcome tensions. In short we are bringing the 'Spirit of Davos' to St Petersburg."

The participants are expected to discuss a wide range of issues, such as energy supply, the role of Russia in addressing the problem of climate change, Russia's commitments to reforms, and Russia's role in the international arena.

"The Russia CEO Roundtable is the latest in a long list of meetings and discussions we have had with our Russian partners. It is the extension of the dialogue we started in the early 90s," said Felix Howald, Director for Europe, World Economic Forum, at a press conference in St Petersburg. "There was a record participation of Russian businesses and government representatives at our last Annual Meeting in Davos and we very much hope to welcome President Putin to Davos in 2008."

The World Economic Forum has been engaging with Russia since September 1991 and has held regional meetings at regular intervals in Moscow ever since. President Vladimir Putin personally participated in the World Economic Forum in Russia in 2003 and First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev led a record 50-member delegation to the last Annual Meeting in Davos, including Minister of Economic Development and Trade Herman Gref and Governor Valentina Matvienko of St Petersburg.

The World Economic Forum will also use this opportunity to present its new business community of [Global Growth Companies](#). Seventy Russian companies that have a growth rate of over 15% and are likely to join the global top-500 companies within the next decade, are likely to join this group of companies. On 6-8 September 2007, the World Economic Forum will

bring together, this new generation of companies that will fundamentally change the global competitive landscape in [Dalian](#), People's Republic of China.

Notes to Editors

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